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DZHW

German Centre for
Higher Education Research and Science Studies

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN GERMANY

Key findings

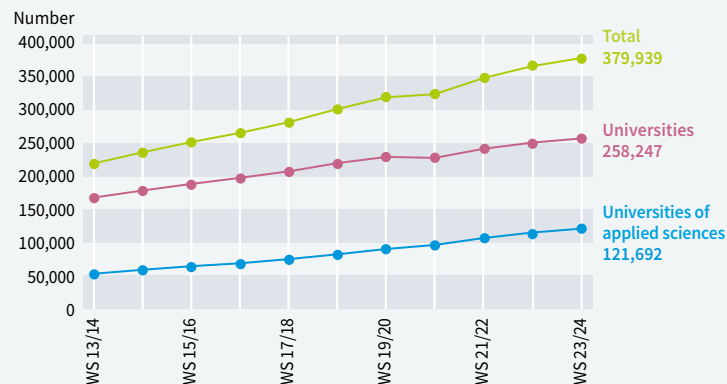
- The **number of international students at universities in Germany** increased again in the 2023/24 winter semester to 379,939 (+3% year-on-year). They account for 13% of all students in Germany. At universities this figure is 15%, at universities of applied sciences 11%.
- Asia and Pacific represents the **key region of origin** for international students with a share of 33%, followed by North Africa and Middle East (19%) and Western Europe (15%). India is once again the **key country of origin**, with around 49,000 students. They account for 13% of all international students in Germany. In second and third place are China with around 38,300 (10%) and Turkey with around 18,100 students (5%).
- The overwhelming majority (93%) of international students were aiming for a degree in Germany in the 2023/24 winter semester; only 7% were exchange or other visiting students not intending to complete a degree in Germany. The share of these students among all international students thus largely returned to the pre-pandemic level (WS 2019/20: 8%, WS 2020/21: 4%, WS 2023/24: 7%).
- **35% of international students intend to obtain a bachelor's degree and 45% a master's degree.** As for the **subject groups**, engineering (42%) and law, economics and social sciences (25%) are predominant.

Data sources and definitions of terms

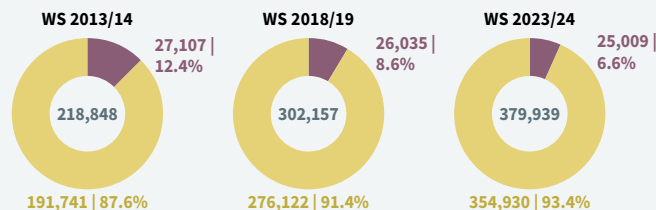
The following data refer to internationally mobile students at universities in Germany. These students hold a foreign citizenship and have acquired their university entrance certificate abroad, or supplemented their school qualification acquired abroad by successfully completing a preparatory course for university admission in Germany. In the publications of the Federal Statistical Office, these students are referred to as *Bildungsausländer*, while *Wissenschaft weltoffen* uses the internationally recognised term “international students”. (It should be noted, however, that in the UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat statistics, all students with a foreign university entrance certificate are categorised as international students, including the corresponding German students.) Another group of students with foreign citizenship are *Bildungsinländer*. They have obtained their university entrance certificate at a school in Germany, or have passed an aptitude or gifted students test here. As they have completed all or most of their schooling in Germany, they are not included in the analyses of *Wissenschaft weltoffen*.

Mobility development

1 International students in Germany by type of university, since the 2013/14 winter semester¹



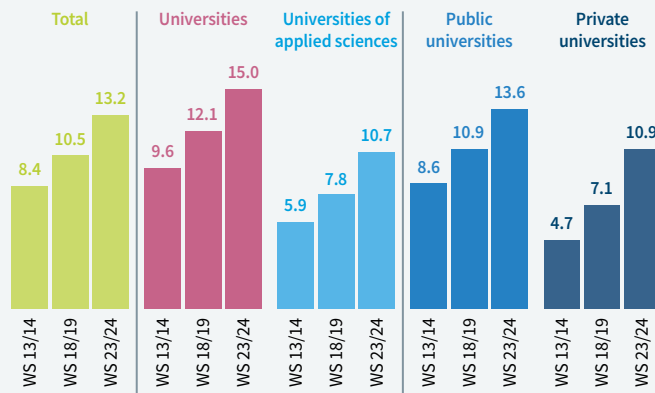
3 International students by type of mobility, since the 2013/14 winter semester



Degree pursued in Germany: ■ Yes ■ No

Number and % of all international students at universities in Germany

2 International students by type of university and type of sponsor, since the 2013/14 winter semester^{1,2}



Share of all students at the universities of the respective type in %

Fig. 1-3

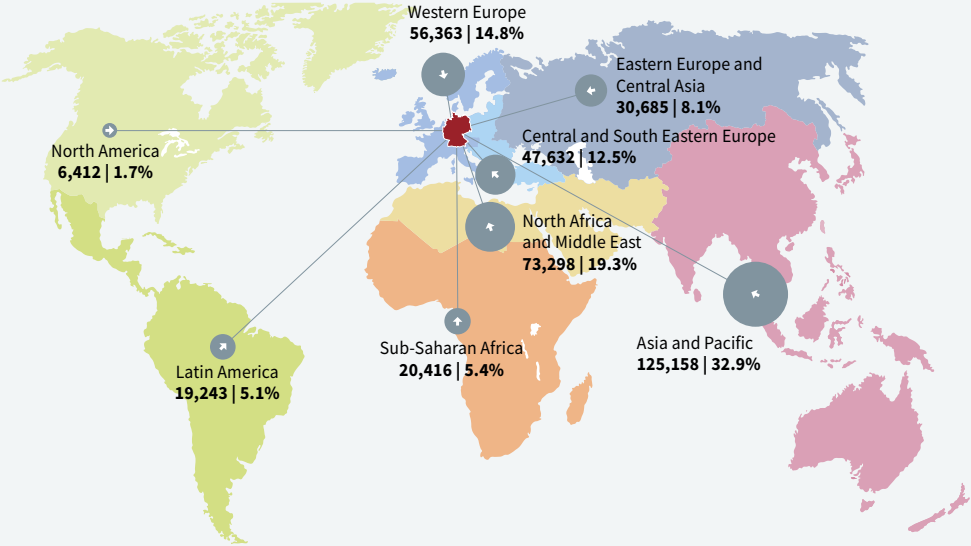
Source: Federal Statistical Office; DZHW calculations

1 Figures for universities including colleges of art, music, education and theology.

2 Figures for private universities including church-run universities.

Regions and countries of origin

📌 4 International students by region of origin, in the 2023/24 winter semester¹



Total international students at universities in Germany: 379,939
(including 732 students who cannot be assigned to a region of origin)

Number and % of all international students at universities in Germany

📌 5 International students by key countries of origin, in the 2023/24 winter semester¹

| Country of origin | Number | In % |
|--------------------|--------|------|
| India | 49,008 | 12.9 |
| China ² | 38,687 | 10.2 |
| Turkey | 18,084 | 4.8 |
| Austria | 15,379 | 4.0 |
| Iran | 15,159 | 4.0 |
| Syria | 13,379 | 3.5 |
| Russia | 10,593 | 2.8 |
| Italy | 10,154 | 2.7 |
| Ukraine | 9,914 | 2.6 |
| Pakistan | 9,873 | 2.6 |
| Egypt | 8,060 | 2.1 |
| Morocco | 7,398 | 1.9 |
| Tunisia | 6,852 | 1.8 |
| Cameroon | 6,789 | 1.8 |
| France | 6,759 | 1.8 |
| Bangladesh | 6,659 | 1.8 |
| South Korea | 6,604 | 1.7 |
| Spain | 6,566 | 1.7 |
| Vietnam | 5,684 | 1.5 |
| US | 5,432 | 1.4 |

Number and % of all international students at universities in Germany

Types of degree and subject groups

6 International students by type of degree and university, in the 2023/24 winter semester^{3,4}

| Type of degree | Total | | Universities | | Universities of applied sciences | |
|---------------------------|---------|------|--------------|------|----------------------------------|------|
| | Number | In % | Number | In % | Number | In % |
| Bachelor's degree | 133,889 | 35.2 | 66,733 | 25.8 | 67,156 | 55.2 |
| Master's degree | 171,280 | 45.1 | 123,992 | 48.0 | 47,288 | 38.9 |
| Doctorate | 30,812 | 8.1 | 30,699 | 11.9 | 113 | 0.1 |
| Other type of degree | 18,949 | 5.0 | 17,383 | 6.7 | 1,566 | 1.3 |
| Not studying for a degree | 25,009 | 6.6 | 19,440 | 7.5 | 5,569 | 4.6 |

Number and % of all international students at universities in Germany

7 International students by subject group and type of university, in the 2023/24 winter semester^{3,4}

| Subject group | Total | | Universities | | Universities of applied sciences | |
|--|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| | Number | In % | Number | In % | Number | In % |
| Engineering | 159,354 | 41.9 | 96,121 | 37.2 | 63,233 | 52.0 |
| Law, economics and social sciences | 96,665 | 25.4 | 53,634 | 20.8 | 43,031 | 35.4 |
| Mathematics and natural sciences | 44,652 | 11.8 | 40,328 | 15.6 | 4,324 | 3.6 |
| Humanities | 33,114 | 8.7 | 32,103 | 12.4 | 1,011 | 0.8 |
| Medicine and health sciences | 18,454 | 4.9 | 15,920 | 6.2 | 2,534 | 2.1 |
| Art and art history | 17,983 | 4.7 | 13,391 | 5.2 | 4,592 | 3.8 |
| Agricultural, forestry and food sciences | 8,090 | 2.1 | 5,669 | 2.2 | 2,421 | 2.0 |
| Other | 1,627 | 0.4 | 1,081 | 0.4 | 546 | 0.4 |
| Total | 379,939 | 100 | 258,247 | 100 | 121,692 | 100 |

Number and % of all international students at universities in Germany

Fig. 4–7

Source: Federal Statistical Office; DZHW calculations

- 1 The country of origin is based on the respective citizenship.
- 2 Incl. Hong Kong and Macao.
- 3 Figures for universities, including colleges of art, music, education and theology.
- 4 Deviations from 100% are due to rounding.

Federal states

8 International students by federal state, in the 2018/19 and 2023/24 winter semesters

| Federal state | WS 2018/19 | | WS 2023/24 | | Development of the number in % |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| | Number | In % | Number | In % | |
| Baden-Württemberg | 37,292 | 10.4 | 36,127 | 10.3 | -3.1 |
| Bavaria | 42,791 | 10.9 | 67,495 | 16.6 | +57.7 |
| Berlin | 33,434 | 17.4 | 41,577 | 20.7 | +24.4 |
| Brandenburg | 7,028 | 14.2 | 10,834 | 21.0 | +54.2 |
| Bremen | 4,721 | 12.6 | 6,019 | 16.0 | +27.5 |
| Hamburg | 10,245 | 9.3 | 13,369 | 11.2 | +30.5 |
| Hesse | 24,948 | 9.5 | 30,217 | 12.3 | +21.1 |
| Lower Saxony | 19,186 | 9.1 | 21,302 | 11.2 | +11.0 |
| Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania | 3,486 | 9.1 | 3,471 | 9.4 | -0.4 |
| North Rhine-Westphalia | 68,992 | 8.8 | 78,293 | 10.9 | +13.5 |
| Rhineland-Palatinate | 11,663 | 9.4 | 13,770 | 12.2 | +18.1 |
| Saarland | 3,812 | 12.1 | 4,255 | 14.0 | +11.6 |
| Saxony | 16,477 | 15.1 | 17,805 | 17.2 | +8.1 |
| Saxony-Anhalt | 6,864 | 12.5 | 9,760 | 17.2 | +42.2 |
| Schleswig-Holstein | 4,119 | 6.4 | 4,557 | 7.1 | +10.6 |
| Thuringia ¹ | 7,099 | 14.3 | 21,088 | 14.6 | +197.1 |
| Total | 302,157 | 10.5 | 379,939 | 13.2 | +25.7 |

Number and % of all students in the respective federal state

Source: Federal Statistical Office; DZHW calculations

9 Incoming Erasmus students by federal state, in 2023^{2, 3, 4}

| Federal state | Number | In % |
|-------------------------------|--------|------|
| Baden-Württemberg | 3,853 | 10.7 |
| Bavaria | 3,697 | 6.0 |
| Berlin | 2,276 | 5.6 |
| Brandenburg | 534 | 5.5 |
| Bremen | 304 | 5.3 |
| Hamburg | 595 | 4.6 |
| Hesse | 1,495 | 5.1 |
| Lower Saxony | 1,199 | 5.6 |
| Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania | 137 | 3.8 |
| North Rhine-Westphalia | 3,395 | 4.3 |
| Rhineland-Palatinate | 1,008 | 7.2 |
| Saarland | 262 | 6.2 |
| Saxony | 988 | 5.8 |
| Saxony-Anhalt | 240 | 2.5 |
| Schleswig-Holstein | 367 | 8.1 |
| Thuringia | 588 | 3.1 |

Number and % of all international students in the respective federal state

Sources: DAAD; Federal Statistical Office

First-year students and graduates

 **10** International first-year students and graduates by type of degree, in 2013, 2018 and 2023^{5,6}

| | 2013 | | 2018 | | 2023 | |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| First-year students | Number | In % | Number | In % | Number | In % |
| Bachelor's degree | 22,521 | 26.1 | 32,735 | 29.8 | 30,327 | 26.0 |
| Master's degree | 21,384 | 24.8 | 32,754 | 29.8 | 44,277 | 38.0 |
| Doctorate | 3,395 | 3.9 | 3,329 | 3.0 | 3,500 | 3.0 |
| Other type of degree | 3,874 | 4.5 | 4,067 | 3.7 | 3,728 | 3.2 |
| Not studying for a degree | 34,996 | 40.6 | 37,110 | 33.7 | 34,803 | 29.8 |
| Total | 86,170 | 100 | 109,995 | 100 | 116,635 | 100 |
| Graduates | Number | In % | Number | In % | Number | In % |
| Bachelor's degree | 8,450 | 26.3 | 11,704 | 26.6 | 16,626 | 28.3 |
| Master's degree | 13,163 | 41.0 | 24,773 | 56.3 | 33,702 | 57.3 |
| Doctorate | 4,237 | 13.2 | 4,903 | 11.1 | 5,561 | 9.5 |
| Other type of degree | 6,287 | 19.6 | 2,601 | 5.9 | 2,929 | 5.0 |

Number and % of all international first-year students and graduates at universities in Germany

Source: Federal Statistical Office; DZHW calculations

- 1 The significant increase in Thuringia is mainly due to the relocation of the headquarters of the "IU International University" from North Rhine-Westphalia to Thuringia.
- 2 The shares of all international students refer to the 2022/23 winter semester.
- 3 Erasmus+ statistics from 2022: due to a programme restructuring, the funding period covers 26 months and thus regularly begins on 1 June of the previous year and ends on 31 July of the following year.
- 4 Erasmus mobility figures since June 2020 also include visits in hybrid format, i.e. a combination of physical and virtual visits. Purely virtual visits and mobility that did not take place were not counted.
- 5 First-year students are all students in their first university semester. A cohort comprises the first-year students of a summer semester and the following winter semester (2023 = first-year students summer semester 2023 + winter semester 2023/24). Graduates are all former students who have successfully obtained their degree. A graduation year comprises the graduates of a winter semester and the following summer semester (2023 = graduates winter semester 2022/23 + summer semester 2023).
- 6 Deviations from 100% are due to rounding.

GERMAN STUDENTS ABROAD

Key findings

- **In 2022, around 138,800 Germans were studying abroad** and the majority of these students were also pursuing a degree abroad. The **key host countries** were Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the US. In terms of temporary study-related visits abroad, the United Kingdom was in first place, followed by France, Spain, the US and Italy.
- Looking at the **development of degree-related mobility**, it becomes clear that, in the period between 2002 and 2010, that is, during the introduction of the new, tiered study system, above-average growth rates of 10% and more were achieved per year. After the introduction of the new degree types, however, the absolute number of German students abroad has not increased further. In 2020, it fell by around 4,000 students due to the pandemic, but rose again in the following two years, and was thus above the pre-pandemic level of 2019 in 2022 again. The share of German students abroad among all German students has fallen slightly in recent years, also due to the strong increase in the number of students in Germany up to 2015. It currently (2022) amounts to 5.2%.
- Between 1991 and 2000, the share of domestic students on **temporary study-related visits** abroad rose sharply (from 20% to 32%) and stabilised at this level until 2006. From 2009 onwards, a steady decline in this mobility rate can be observed, down to 19% in 2021. However, it should be noted that the figures up to 2009 and from 2012 onwards are not directly comparable due to a change in the calculation methodology.

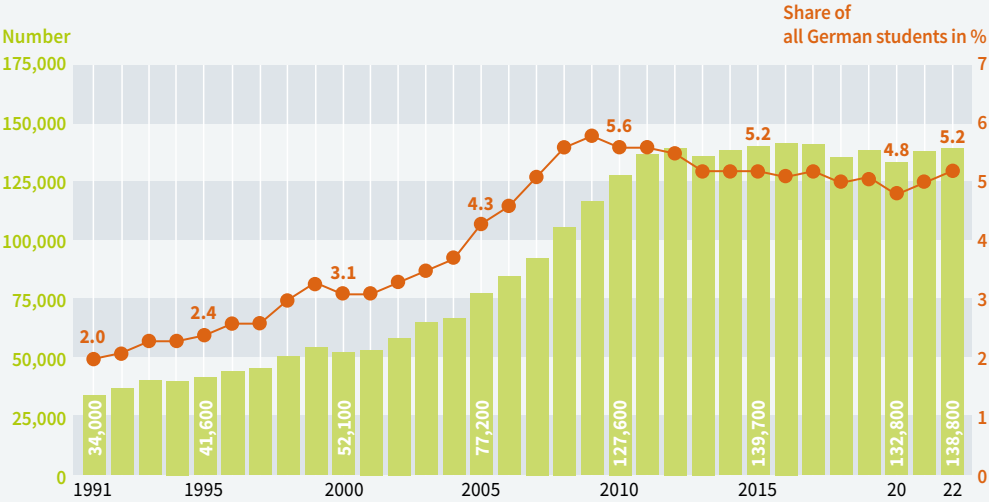
Data sources and definitions of terms

With regard to the international mobility of German students, a distinction is made between temporary study-related visits abroad with a degree in Germany and degree-related international mobility. To collect **data on degree-related international mobility**, the Federal Statistical Office conducts an annual survey with the respective responsible statistical offices in approximately 40 major host countries of German students. The majority of these students are pursuing a degree abroad. The data collected in this manner are therefore interpreted here as data on degree-related international mobility.

To date, there are no reliable official statistics on the total number of **temporary study-related visits abroad** by domestic students (Germans and *Bildungsinländer*). The data from the social surveys conducted jointly by the German National Association for Student Affairs (DSW) and the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW) until 2016 represent the most reliable source of data for this period. Since 2021, the social survey has been continued as “The Student Survey in Germany”. Its current data from 2021 form the basis for the present calculations of the international mobility rate. Only the subsection of Erasmus visits, which account for around a third of all temporary study-related visits abroad by domestic students, is fully recorded.

Degree-related mobility

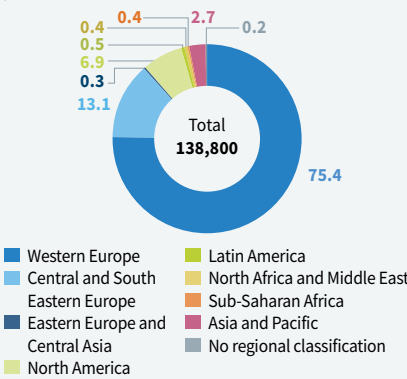
11 German students abroad, since 1991^{1,2}



Source: Federal Statistical Office, “Deutsche Studierende im Ausland” survey, country-specific reporting periods; DAAD calculations

1 2010–2018: including results of a survey of doctoral candidates; from 2019: including results of the official statistics of doctoral candidates.
2 2022: 2,550,961 German students at home. German students abroad thus account for 5.2% of all German students at home and abroad.
3 In addition to the host countries covered by the Federal Statistical Office, this includes those countries in which, according to UNESCO student statistics, more than ten German students were enrolled in 2021 or 2022.
4 Deviations from 100% are due to rounding.

12 German students abroad by host region and key host countries, in 2022^{3,4}

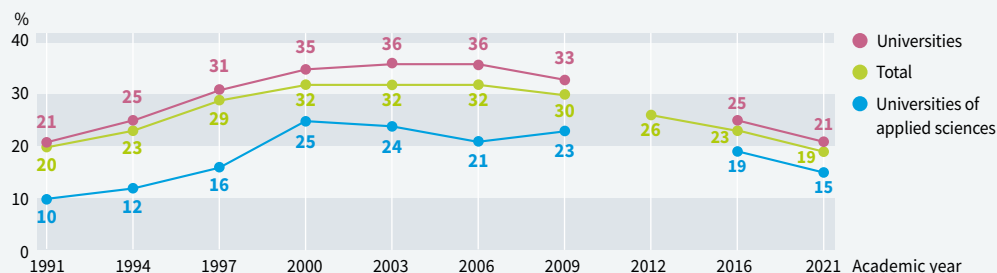


| Top 10 host countries | Number | In % |
|-----------------------|--------|------|
| Austria | 37,766 | 27.2 |
| Netherlands | 22,637 | 16.3 |
| Switzerland | 12,485 | 9.0 |
| United Kingdom | 9,625 | 6.9 |
| US | 8,550 | 6.2 |
| France | 4,701 | 3.4 |
| Turkey | 4,448 | 3.2 |
| Hungary | 3,340 | 2.4 |
| Portugal | 3,268 | 2.4 |
| Denmark | 3,240 | 2.3 |

Number and % of all German students abroad
Sources: Federal Statistical Office, “Deutsche Studierende im Ausland” survey; UNESCO, student statistics; country-specific reporting periods; DAAD calculations

Temporary study-related visits abroad

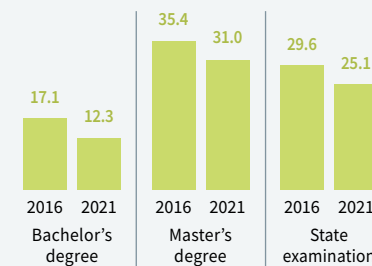
13 Domestic students in later semesters on temporary study-related visits abroad, by type of university, since 1991^{1,2,3,4}



Share of all domestic students in later semesters in %

Sources: DSW/DZHW Social Surveys 1991–2016; DZHW, The Student Survey in Germany (2021)

14 Domestic students in later semesters on temporary study-related visits abroad, by type of degree, in 2016 and 2021^{1,3,5,6}

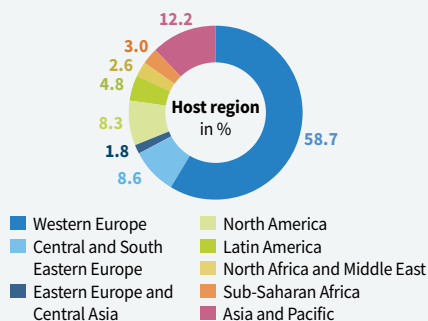


Share of all domestic students in later semesters in %

Sources: DSW/DZHW Social Survey (2016); DZHW, The Student Survey in Germany (2021)

15 Temporary study-related visits abroad of domestic students, by host region and key host countries, in 2021⁵

| Host country | In % | Host country | In % |
|--------------|------|----------------|------|
| UK | 9.6 | Finland | 2.7 |
| France | 8.9 | Norway | 2.4 |
| Spain | 8.3 | China | 2.4 |
| US | 6.2 | Australia | 2.2 |
| Italy | 4.6 | Canada | 2.0 |
| Sweden | 3.8 | Belgium | 1.9 |
| Ireland | 3.3 | Japan | 1.8 |
| Austria | 3.1 | Poland | 1.5 |
| Netherlands | 3.0 | Czech Republic | 1.4 |
| Switzerland | 2.8 | Portugal | 1.4 |



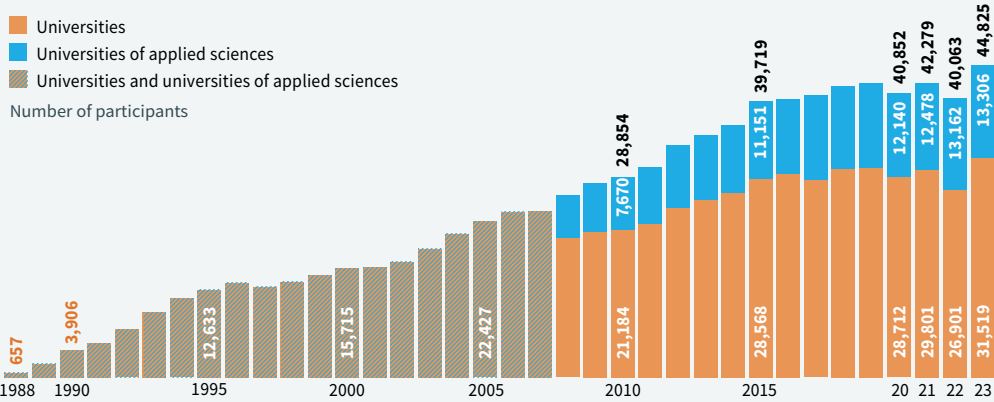
Share of all study-related visits abroad of domestic students in %

Source: DZHW, The Student Survey in Germany (2021)

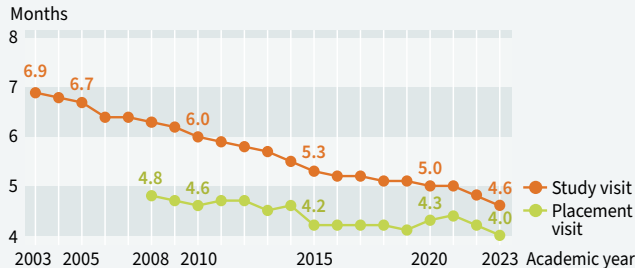
- 1 The mobility rate of students in later semesters or at the end of their studies makes it possible to assess study-related international mobility over the course of an entire study cycle. It is thus more meaningful than mobility rates in relation to students across all semesters. Students in later semesters from 1991 to 1994 are students from the 8th university semester (university) or 6th university semester (university of applied sciences) (1991: West Germany only); from 1997 to 2009: students from the 9th to 14th university semester (university) or 7th to 11th university semester (university of applied sciences). From 2012: students from the 6th university semester.
- 2 Reference group: from 1991 to 2009: German nationals and *Bildungsinländer*; from 2012: German nationals and *Bildungsinländer*, not including students in part-time, distance learning and on-the-job degree programmes.
- 3 Surveys in 2016 and 2021 including students who were undertaking a temporary study-related visit abroad at the time of the survey.
- 4 For statistical reasons, it was not possible to calculate separate quotas for universities and universities of applied sciences for 2012.
- 5 Later semesters: students from the 6th university semester (bachelor's degree), students from the 4th programme semester (master's degree), students from the 9th university semester (state examination).
- 6 Reference group: German nationals and *Bildungsinländer*, not including students in part-time, distance learning and on-the-job degree programmes.

Erasmus visits

16 Erasmus participants from Germany, by type of university, since 1988^{1, 2, 3}



17 Average duration of visits abroad of German Erasmus participants, by type of visit, since 2003^{2, 3, 4}



18 Erasmus participants from Germany, by key host countries, in 2023^{2, 3}

| Host country | Number | In % |
|----------------|--------|------|
| Spain | 7,810 | 17.4 |
| France | 5,711 | 12.7 |
| Italy | 4,365 | 9.7 |
| Sweden | 2,627 | 5.9 |
| Austria | 2,385 | 5.3 |
| Norway | 2,346 | 5.2 |
| Finland | 2,227 | 5.0 |
| Netherlands | 1,961 | 4.4 |
| Portugal | 1,769 | 3.9 |
| Turkey | 1,510 | 3.4 |
| Ireland | 1,461 | 3.3 |
| Belgium | 1,246 | 2.8 |
| Denmark | 1,010 | 2.3 |
| Poland | 954 | 2.1 |
| Czech Republic | 907 | 2.0 |

Number of Erasmus participants and their share of all Erasmus participants in %

Fig. 16–18
Source: DAAD, Erasmus statistics

- 1 A breakdown of visits by type of university is only possible from 2008 onwards.
- 2 Erasmus statistics until 2014: a funding period starts in the winter semester and ends in the summer semester of the following year. 2014 = winter semester 2013/14 + summer semester 2014. Erasmus+ statistics from 2015 to 2021: an Erasmus funding period starts on 1 June of the previous year and ends on 31 May of the following year (2021 = 1 June 2020 to 31 May 2022). Erasmus+ statistics from 2022: due to programme restructuring, the funding period covers 26 months and thus regularly begins on 1 June of the previous year and ends on 31 July of the following year.
- 3 Erasmus mobility figures since June 2020 also include visits in hybrid format, i.e. a combination of physical and virtual visits. Purely virtual visits and mobility that did not take place were not counted.
- 4 Placement visits have been funded in the Erasmus programme since 2008.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WORLDWIDE

Key findings

- In 2022, around **6.9 million students were enrolled outside their home country**, according to UNESCO. Since 2012, the number of these internationally mobile students has increased by around 2.8 million or 68%. Western Europe (30%), Asia and Pacific (19%) and North America (18%) dominate among **host regions**, while the Asia-Pacific region (41%) stands out among **regions of origin**.
- The **US is the key host country** for internationally mobile students. Around 874,000 or 13% of all international students worldwide were enrolled in the US in 2022. The United Kingdom (10%), Germany, Australia (6% each) and Russia (5%) followed at a considerable distance as host countries.
- The **key country of origin of internationally mobile students is China**. In total, around 1 million, or 15%, of all internationally mobile students came from China in 2022. India (9%), Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Germany (2% each), the other major countries of origin, trailed significantly behind.
- The **largest flows of internationally mobile students** lead from the key country of origin China to the key host country, the US, and to the United Kingdom. These flows are followed by the flows of Indian students to the US, the United Kingdom and Canada. The respective mobility flows result in different **mobility balances** in the various countries. The spectrum ranges from countries such as Australia, with a ratio of only 3% outbound to 97% inbound students, to countries such as Uzbekistan, with a ratio of 96% outbound to 4% inbound students.

Data sources and definitions of terms

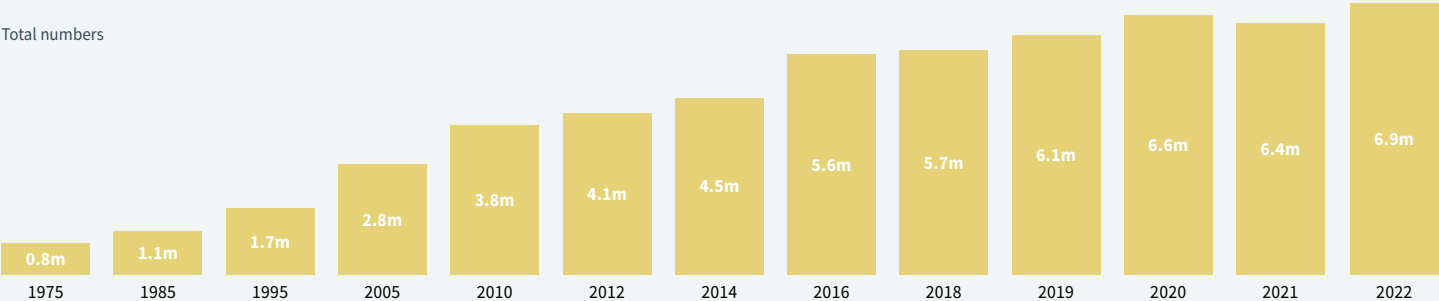
For the analysis of international student mobility, *Wissenschaft weltoffen* uses the **UNESCO statistics on international students**. These statistics often differ from the corresponding national statistics as, in some cases, different groups of people are defined as students. As far as possible, UNESCO records internationally mobile students in all countries, in other words, students who did not have their place of residence in the country concerned before taking up their studies and/or who acquired their previous education abroad (referred to as non-resident students). However, such data are not available for some countries, such as Italy, Russia, South Korea and Turkey. The figures for these countries still refer to the total group of all foreign students who do not have the citizenship of the host country (non-citizen students).

Moreover, the UNESCO statistics are **not based on a complete survey of all mobile students worldwide** but only on their best possible approximation using the data available in each case. Missing data are estimated. The availability and quality of the data depend heavily on the development of education statistics in the respective countries. Some countries, especially in Latin America and in Africa, are not yet able to provide any data on international students at their universities. Even China, now a major host country, does not yet provide UNESCO with data on the origin of international students in China. This inevitably leads to an underestimation of the importance of certain host countries and regions of origin.

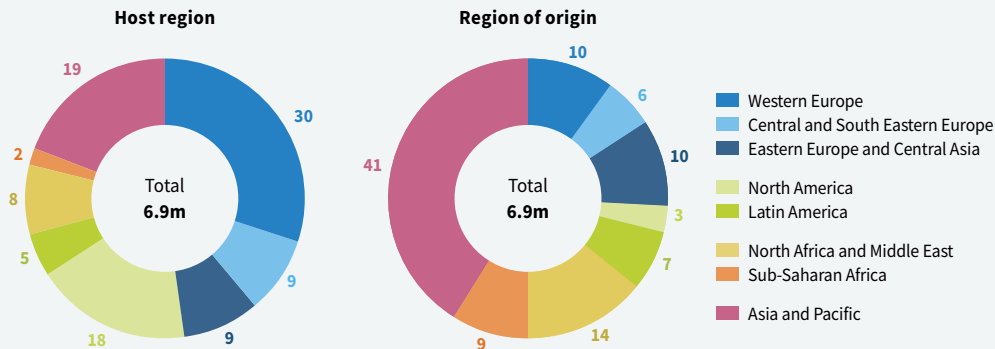
Mobility development and regions of origin

19 International students worldwide, since 1975¹

Total numbers



20 International students by host region and region of origin, in 2022



Share of all international students worldwide in %

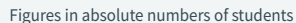
Fig. 19
Source: UNESCO, student statistics; country-specific reporting periods

Fig. 20
Source: UNESCO, student statistics; country-specific reporting periods; DAAD calculations

The basis for the collection and processing of data is the *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED). This classification helps establish the international comparability of national data. Used by UNESCO, it differs in part from the national classifications used. Students are defined here as those assigned to ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8.

¹ Deviations in comparison with previous issues of *Wissenschaft weltoffen* and *Wissenschaft weltoffen kompakt* are due to updates of the UNESCO database.

 21 Major flows of international student mobility, in 2022^{1,2}



22 Key host countries and countries of origin of international students, in 2022²

| Country of origin | Number | In % | Host country | Number | In % |
|--------------------|-----------|------|--------------------|-----------|------|
| China ⁷ | 1,017,242 | 15.0 | US | 873,576 | 12.9 |
| India | 621,623 | 9.2 | United Kingdom | 674,931 | 9.9 |
| Uzbekistan | 150,488 | 2.2 | Germany | 403,473 | 5.9 |
| Vietnam | 134,141 | 2.0 | Australia | 382,007 | 5.6 |
| Germany | 126,241 | 1.9 | Russia | 340,326 | 5.0 |
| US | 115,026 | 1.7 | Canada | 336,837 | 5.0 |
| France | 113,515 | 1.7 | France | 263,459 | 3.9 |
| Nigeria | 112,416 | 1.7 | Turkey | 244,027 | 3.6 |
| Syria | 104,987 | 1.5 | China ⁷ | 218,506 | 3.2 |
| Nepal | 95,092 | 1.4 | Japan | 199,298 | 2.9 |
| Other countries | 4,194,048 | 61.8 | Other countries | 2,848,379 | 42.0 |

Number and % of all international students worldwide

23 Mobility balances in selected host countries and countries of origin, in 2022²

| Internationally mobile students | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------|--|----------|---------|
| Country | Number | Outgoing | | Incoming | |
| | | In % | | Number | |
| Uzbekistan | 150,488 | 96 | | 4 | 5,503 |
| Vietnam | 134,141 | 95 | | 5 | 7,760 |
| India | 621,623 | 93 | | 7 | 46,659 |
| China ⁷ | 1,017,242 | 82 | | 18 | 218,506 |
| Brazil | 87,337 | 78 | | 22 | 24,009 |
| South Korea | 87,535 | 42 | | 58 | 123,280 |
| France | 113,515 | 30 | | 70 | 263,459 |
| Germany | 126,241 | 24 | | 76 | 403,473 |
| Turkey | 60,322 | 20 | | 80 | 244,027 |
| Russia | 63,578 | 16 | | 84 | 340,326 |
| Japan | 31,286 | 14 | | 86 | 199,298 |
| Canada | 51,819 | 13 | | 87 | 336,837 |
| US | 115,026 | 12 | | 88 | 873,576 |
| United Kingdom | 41,539 | 6 | | 94 | 674,931 |

Number and % of all incoming and outgoing students of the respective country

Fig. 21

Sources: UNESCO, student statistics; Federal Statistical Office, "Deutsche Studierende im Ausland" survey; country-specific reporting periods; DAAD calculations

Fig. 22–23

Sources: UNESCO/OECD, student statistics; country-specific reporting periods; DAAD calculations

The basis for the collection and processing of data is the *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED). This classification helps establish the international comparability of national data. Used by UNESCO, it differs in part from the national classifications used. Students are defined here as those assigned to ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8.

- 1 For the sake of clarity, only mobility flows comprising at least 15,000 internationally mobile students are shown.
- 2 Not including the number of international students in China and Singapore as well as Chinese students in Japan, as no current or no data are available.
- 3 Including students from Hong Kong and Macao.
- 4 Unclear whether students from Hong Kong and Macao are included.
- 5 Data on incoming students for 2021, as no UNESCO data for 2022 were yet available at the time the analyses were completed.
- 6 Data from the Federal Statistical Office for 2022, as no UNESCO data for 2022 were yet available at the time the analyses were completed.
- 7 Including Hong Kong and Macao. Mobility between Hong Kong and Macao, as well as from Mainland China to Hong Kong and Macao was excluded. However, as no country-specific data on incoming students are available for Mainland China, students from Hong Kong and Macao going to Mainland China are still included.

RESEARCHER MOBILITY IN GERMANY

Key findings

- In 2023, **around 65,500 academic and artistic staff with foreign citizenship were employed at universities in Germany**, including around 4,100 international professors. This means that international staff accounted for 15% of all academic staff. The share of international professors amounted to 8%.
- The **key region of origin** of international academic staff is Western Europe. In 2023, 29% of all international academic staff and as many as 62% of international professors came from Western European countries. The **key countries of origin** of international academic staff were India (9%), China and Italy (7% each). Most international professors came from Austria (19%), Italy (9%) and Switzerland (8%).
- In 2022, **around 16,600 academics and researchers with foreign citizenship** were employed at the four largest **non-university research institutes**. Since 2012, their number has doubled (+105%), so that in 2022, around 30% of all academics and researchers in Germany came from abroad. EU countries accounted for 35% and other European countries for 15% of all international academics and researchers.
- In addition to employed international academic staff, **international guest researchers**, whose visits are funded by domestic and foreign organisations, also research and teach in Germany. In 2022, around 30,100 visits were funded. Western Europe and Asia and Pacific were the key regions of origin, with shares of 21% each. Conversely, in 2022, around 8,300 visits by German

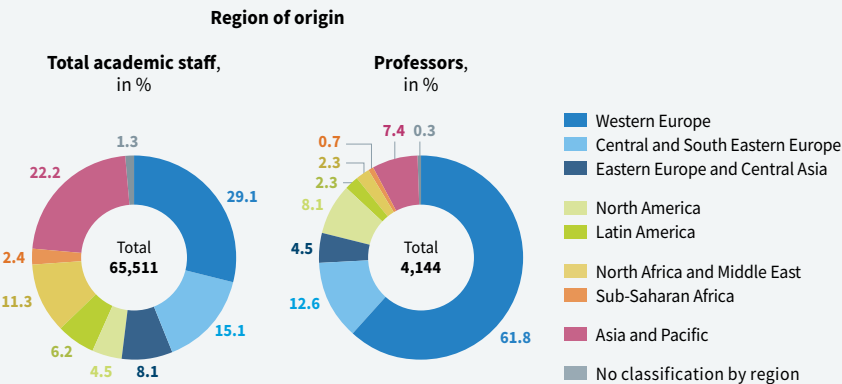
guest researchers abroad were funded by domestic and foreign organisations. Western Europe was the key host region (30%), followed by North America (19%) and Central and South Eastern Europe (14%).

Data sources and definitions of terms

The following analyses cover international academics and researchers in Germany as well as German academics and researchers abroad. With regard to the former, a distinction is made between international staff at German universities or non-university research institutes, based on data from the Federal Statistical Office, and funded visits by international guest researchers in Germany. The latter data are collected from the respective funding organisations by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW) within the framework of *Wissenschaft weltoffen*. This survey also covers the funded visits of German academics and researchers abroad. Only visits funded by the organizations surveyed are recorded. Visits funded by other German and foreign institutions are not included. The data presented here therefore represent a significant part, but not all of the funded visits of German and international academics and researchers.


International academic staff at German universities

 **24** Total international academic staff and international professors at universities in Germany, by region of origin and key countries of origin, in 2023^{1, 2, 3, 4}



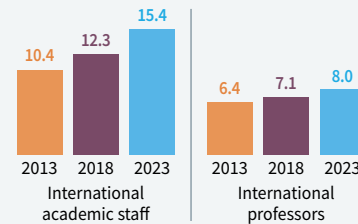
| Country of origin | Total academic staff | | Country of origin | Professors | |
|-------------------|----------------------|------|-------------------|------------|------|
| | Number | In % | | Number | In % |
| India | 5,758 | 8.9 | Austria | 775 | 18.7 |
| China | 4,628 | 7.1 | Italy | 355 | 8.6 |
| Italy | 4,536 | 7.0 | Switzerland | 334 | 8.1 |
| Austria | 3,136 | 4.8 | US | 277 | 6.7 |
| Iran | 2,998 | 4.6 | Netherlands | 267 | 6.4 |
| Russia | 2,804 | 4.3 | France | 208 | 5.0 |
| US | 2,423 | 3.7 | Spain | 167 | 4.0 |
| Spain | 2,420 | 3.7 | United Kingdom | 162 | 3.9 |
| France | 2,269 | 3.5 | Russia | 115 | 2.8 |
| Turkey | 2,222 | 3.4 | Greece | 104 | 2.5 |
| United Kingdom | 1,544 | 2.4 | China | 101 | 2.4 |
| Greece | 1,489 | 2.3 | Poland | 86 | 2.1 |
| Netherlands | 1,390 | 2.1 | Belgium | 84 | 2.0 |
| Ukraine | 1,322 | 2.0 | Turkey | 62 | 1.5 |

Number and % of international academic staff and of international professors

 **25** International and German academic staff at universities in Germany, by staff group, in 2013, 2018 and 2023^{1, 2, 3}

| Staff group | 2023 | |
|------------------------------------|---------|------|
| | Number | In % |
| Total German academic staff | 360,240 | 84.6 |
| Thereof: professors | 47,728 | 11.2 |
| Total international academic staff | 65,511 | 15.4 |
| Thereof: professors | 4,145 | 1.0 |

Number and % of the total academic staff



% of total academic staff/international professors

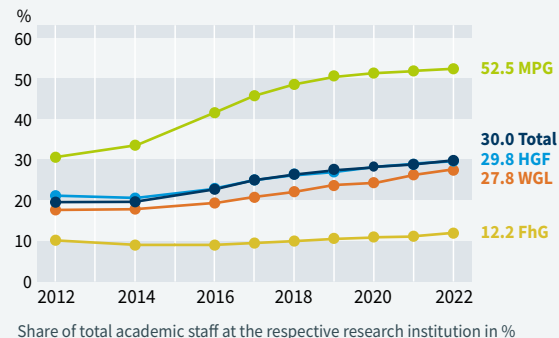
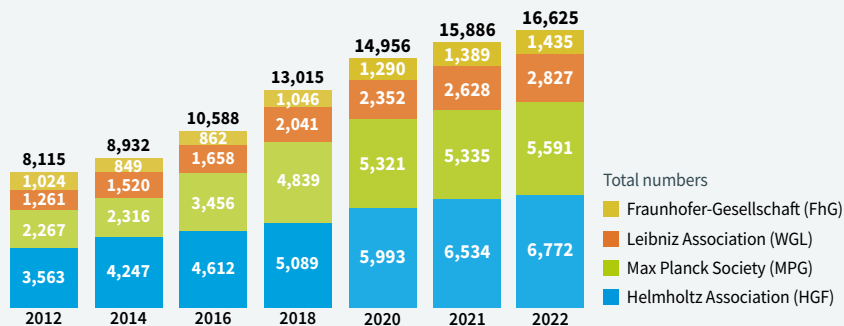
Fig. 24–25

Source: Federal Statistical Office, university staff statistics

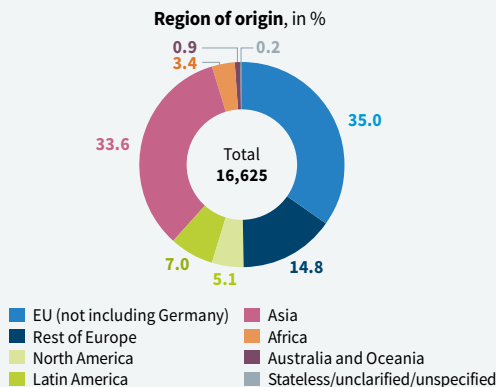
- 1 Total academic staff including professors as well as artistic staff at colleges of art and music.
- 2 International staff = staff with foreign, unclear, unknown or no citizenship (stateless).
- 3 The year corresponds to the calendar year (reference date: 1 December).
- 4 Deviations from 100% are due to rounding.

International academic staff at non-university research institutes

26 International academic staff at the four largest German non-university research institutes, since 2012^{1, 2, 3}



27 International academic staff at the four largest German non-university research institutes, by region and key countries of origin, in 2022^{1, 2, 4, 5}



Total number and % of all regions and countries of origin

| Top 10 countries of origin | Number | In % |
|----------------------------|--------|------|
| India | 1,746 | 10.5 |
| China | 1,617 | 9.7 |
| Italy | 1,406 | 8.5 |
| Russia | 833 | 5.0 |
| France | 734 | 4.4 |
| Spain | 699 | 4.2 |
| US | 653 | 3.9 |
| Iran | 579 | 3.5 |
| Austria | 457 | 2.7 |

Fig. 26-27

Source: Federal Statistical Office, statistics on non-university research institutes; DZHW calculations

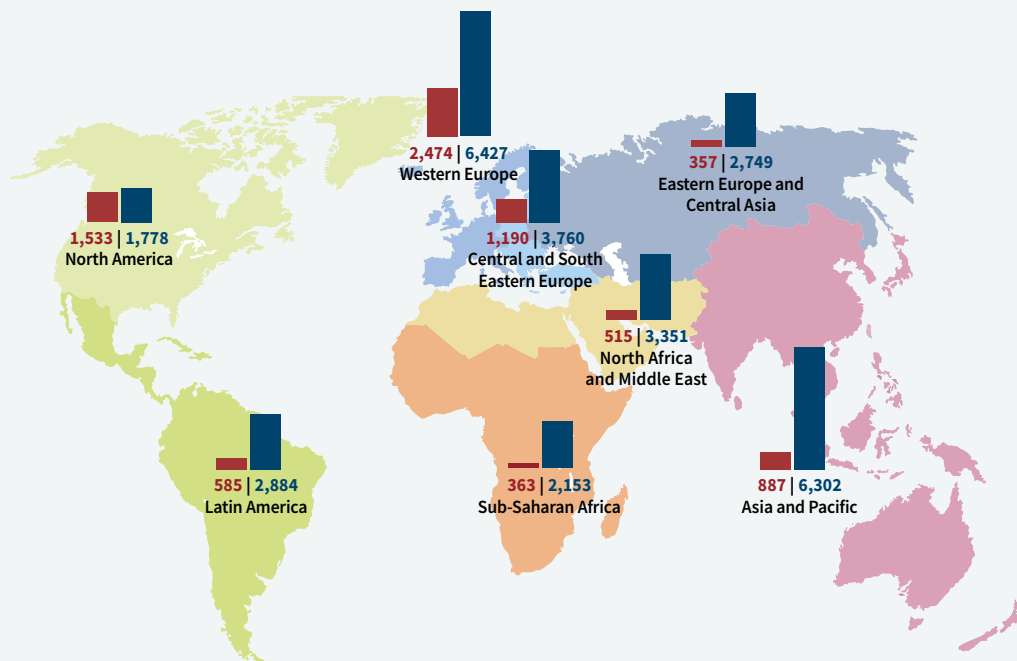
Fig. 28

Source: DZHW survey, responses from funding organisations; DZHW calculations

- 1 Data from the Federal Statistical Office on staff at non-university research institutes refer to calendar years and not to academic years (reference date: 1 June).
- 2 International staff = staff with foreign, unclear, unknown or no citizenship (stateless).
- 3 The comparability of time series data before 2014 is limited due to a change in data collection since 2014.
- 4 In the official statistics on non-university research institutes, the origin of international staff is not available by more differentiated regions, but by continents. 26 researchers could not be assigned to a region of origin.
- 5 Deviations from 100% are due to rounding.
- 6 Foreign funding organisations, with the exception of EU funding within the framework of the Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions, generally sponsor visits to Germany of guest researchers from their respective countries of location.
- 7 Not included: Helmholtz Association, Max Planck Society, Leibniz Association and Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft.

Funded guest researchers

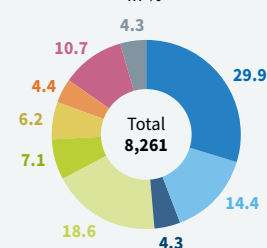
🕒 28 Funded visits of German guest researchers abroad and of international guest researchers in Germany, by host region and region of origin, in 2022^{5,6,7}



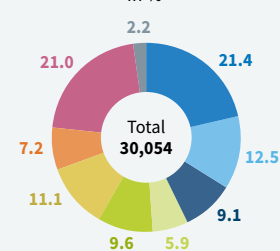
■ Funded German guest researchers abroad
■ Funded international guest researchers in Germany

Excluding 357 German and 650 international guest researchers for whom no information was available regarding their host country or country of origin.

German guest researchers abroad, in %



International guest researchers in Germany, in %



■ Western Europe
■ Central and South Eastern Europe
■ Eastern Europe and Central Asia
■ North America
■ Latin America
■ North Africa and Middle East
■ Sub-Saharan Africa
■ Asia and Pacific
■ No regional classification

Wissenschaft weltoffen



The main edition of *Wissenschaft weltoffen* contains comprehensive data and facts on the internationalisation of study and research in Germany. You can download it as a PDF free of charge at www.wissenschaft-weltoffen.de. The next issue is scheduled to be published in October 2025.

We also present additional data and information on the *Wissenschaft weltoffen* website, where you can find comprehensive charts, information on other evaluation options and a detailed glossary.

The German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW) has set up a service point to provide advice and support evaluations of data from the *Wissenschaft weltoffen* data pool and to carry out these evaluations, if required. This service is available free of charge for universities and other public institutions.

Please address your enquiries to:
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